



## U.S. Department of Justice

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### Press Release

#### **Three Kenosha Men Sentenced to Prison for Trafficking in Stolen Infant Formula**

Steven M. Biskupic, the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, announced that the third defendant involved in a conspiracy to deal in stolen infant formula and to submit false documents to the government was sentenced on June 3, 2008 in federal court in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

United States District Judge Charles N. Clevert sentenced Murad Daher, 33, of Kenosha, Wisconsin, to serve 15 months in federal prison following his conviction of submitting false infant-formula purchase receipts to the Women, Infants, and Children program, also known as the WIC Program. The WIC program serves to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children who are at nutritional risk, by providing nutritious foods to supplement their diets.

Earlier this year, Judge Clevert sentenced Daher's co-defendant and brother, Raid Thahir, 39, to a statutory-maximum 60 months' imprisonment for conspiring to traffic in stolen infant formula and submitting false documents to the WIC Program. Judge Clevert sentenced Daher's other co-defendant and brother, Fuad Zaher, 36, to 30 months' imprisonment, for submitting false documents to the WIC Program. The three brothers operated Mike's Foods, located at 1625 57th Street, Kenosha, and "Fast and Friendly Market," located at 1626 56th Street, Kenosha, Wisconsin.

According to the indictment, the three brothers bought stolen infant formula from various sources, had stolen infant formula transported from Ohio to Wisconsin; and then received WIC vouchers in exchange for stolen infant formula. In June 2003, David Beem, a WIC Program Compliance Manager employed by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, requested copies of their supplier invoices to document their purchases of infant formula. Shortly thereafter, according to the indictment, Thahir traveled to Ohio, where he supervised the creation of the false invoices that he and his brothers then submitted to the WIC program.

At Thahir's sentencing, Judge Charles N. Clevert found that Thahir, by conspiring to submit false documents, sought to conceal that he had obtained reimbursement from the WIC program, on behalf of both of the family's convenience stores, for over \$400,000 in stolen and apparently stolen infant formula for which Thahir did not have legitimate supplier invoices. Judge Clevert enhanced Thahir's sentence on the grounds that Thahir had been in the business of dealing in stolen property; had supervised others in connection with purchasing stolen formula and creating false receipts; and had attempted to discourage a witness from cooperating with the investigation.

In sentencing Zaher and Daher, Judge Clevert found that each of those defendants was responsible for over \$200,000 in losses in that, by knowingly submitting false documents to the WIC program, they sought to conceal that each of their stores had obtained over \$200,000 in reimbursements from the WIC program for apparently stolen infant formula for which they did not have legitimate supplier invoices.

The case was investigated by the United States Department of Agriculture - Office of the Inspector General. The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, which administers the WIC program in Wisconsin, conducted the audit of the Kenosha convenience stores that contributed to the opening of the federal investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Scott Campbell prosecuted this case. AUSA Campbell stated: "As a result of the diligent efforts of the United States Department of Agriculture - Office of the Inspector General, which investigated this case, and the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, which conducted the audit of the defendants' stores, the United States has brought to justice the operators of two convenience stores who dealt in stolen and unlawfully obtained infant formula and who also knowingly submitted false documents to the government to conceal their unlawful activities. This case shows that those who deal in stolen infant formula face the very real prospect of significant jail time."

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